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There was a late introduction of agriculture which will be described presently, but its influence always remained slight. The Apache's efforts were not directed toward improving upon nature's offerings, but rather upon utilizing the largest number of natural goods, and using each one to the best advantage.

The utilization of plants for food, drinks, and narcotics was but one facet of this process, of course. In succeeding bulletins we expect to give some indication of the degree to which wild plants were used for medicines and for the making of tools, weapons, and artifacts in general. Every tree and bush had been tested for its qualities in all cultural contexts. Any Chiricahua or Mescalero above middle age will tell you that mulberry wood made the finest bow and that locust runs it a close second for this purpose. The wood of the chokecherry bush was the universal favorite among these Apache for arrows. Oak was considered the most durable for the outer rim of the cradle-board. The Apache took pride in matching his materials to the purpose at hand.

But to appreciate the total round of Apache life and thinking, and to comprehend the significance of many features of the culture, our understanding of the Apache's relation to his natural surroundings must penetrate even further. That relation does not halt with a minute scrutiny of the environment and the practical applications which flow therefrom. It involves the Apache's world conception and his total relationship to nature.

The Apache, however arrogant may have been his relations with his fellowmen, was entirely cognizant of his abjectness and dependence before natural forces. He relied upon nature's bounty and suffered when drought or inclement weather curtailed it. He never lacked for vigorous enemies. He was ever a prey to frightening sicknesses. In the battle of wits between him and the wild game he stalked he was many times out-distanced. Whatever hazards he surmounted, there were always old age and death to strike him down at last. In the words of his own prayers, before the forces of nature he was "a poor fellow," and "a pitiable object."

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181 In comparison to himself many natural forces seemed
182 unaccountably potent. Cyclones uprooted trees and left him
82 terror-stricken. The lightning struck and devastated. The sun shone strongly and the plants everywhere renewed life. The Apache saw himself at the mercy of all these forces. He recognized, moreover, how little he could accomplish by himself without the aid of the plants and animals which surrounded him. If the choke-cherry bush did not yield wood for arrows he was defenseless and unable to hunt. If the deer could not be found he lacked clothing and meat.

181 In addition, the traits he shared with other animals
182 did not pass unnoticed for the Apache. He watched many of
825 them prey on others as he was forced to do. He saw them seek food and shelter and fiercely protect their young. That comfortable gap which we have left between ourselves and all other life on the planet, the Apache bridged in a stride.

773 Apache mythology harkens back to a time when all
824 creatures and objects could speak and move and showed
825 human attributes. Later, everything was given its "way"
182 and was differentiated from the human. But the qualities and capacities which these creatures and objects exercised in the mythological period, persist in them today in latent form. In the eyes of the Apache the natural world is potentially alive and aware of his problems. Trees, plants, animals, and insects do not ordinarily speak and assume human form, but if an Apache's need is extreme and he is worthy, any one of these may take pity on him and approach him thus to give him the requisite warning and advice.

182 Therefore the Apache, whether he is praying, or hunt-
824 ing, or acting the craftsman, is not dealing with dumb ani-
825 mals and inanimate plants as the white man would have it, but is concerned with natural objects which know well his intentions, how to thwart the impious and to reward the deserving. These animals and plants are thought to be willing to help the Apache and give of their seeds, fruit, hide, or meat—providing they are approached in the correct manner, with proper attention to rules and ritual which have existed from the time "the earth was new."

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MATERIAL CULTURE

It will be understood that a people who lived by hunting and gathering, whose contacts with nature were so close and exacting, and whose food quest demanded much movement, could not develop a very elaborate material culture. The characteristic dwelling of these Apache tribes was a dome-shaped structure covered with grass thatching, hides, or bark. Household utensils included a pitch-covered woven water jar, coiled basket trays, and large burden baskets of twine work. There were dippers and spoons of split gourds, and ladles of split mountain-sheep horn. Metates and manos were found in the surrounding country and brought to camp, or crude ones were fashioned by the Apache themselves. For household purposes the Apache made rock pounders and stone axes hafted to wooden handles. Occasionally an Apache woman made a few clay pots, but because of the breakage of this ware that attended the roving life, it was found to be an unprofitable procedure. On the march these people carried water containers made from the stomachs or intestines of animals.

There was a distaff-type twisting tool which wound together buffalo or horse hair into rope. Ropes of twisted rawhide were also widely used. Long strips of yucca and mescal leaves were used for binding material. Sinew from the loin and leg of the larger game animals was shredded for thread. Women had a special rawhide rope for wood-carrying and some had a special conveyor of wood and rawhide for this purpose.

The lower leg bone of the deer was ground down to make a drill. Later the iron-tipped arrow was used as a boring tool.

In connection with the horse complex, the men made their own whips, saddles, stirrups, cinches, bridles, saddle bags, and even made rawhide bags which were tied over the hoofs to prevent or cure lameness of horses.

For purposes of grooming, combs of mountain mahogany *(Cercocarpus montanus)* and brushes of folded and pounded mescal or sotol leaves were made.

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MYTHOLOGY

793 The most important Chiricahua and Mescalero Apache myth, and the one which has the greatest implication for Apache ceremonialism, is that which recounts the birth of the culture hero, Child-of-the-Water (whose mother was White-Painted Woman and whose father was Water) and his subsequent destruction of the monsters which were making the earth uninhabitable for humanity. Many elements of Apache ritual life are rationalized in this account. For [824] instance, because Child-of-the-Water used grama grass as his arrow when he slew an evil giant, grama grass is much used in ceremonial contexts, as we have already observed.

A favorite story cycle is one which deals with the travels and adventures of the trickster, Coyote. Coyote is credited with stealing fire for the people, but in most of the episodes he is portrayed as the buffoon, dupe, and violator of Apache mores.

Other myths are concerned with supernaturals, with the origin of games, with the disappearance and restoration of the game animals, with races and contests between different animals, with the mishaps befalling a race of foolish people called "travelers," and with a variety of motifs too numerous to list here.

GAMES AND SOCIAL DANCES

526 [181] [525] The Apache were anything but a somber people. They enjoyed gambling games and social occasions. The men played a hoop and pole game which was connected with ceremony and which the women were not permitted to watch. Stave games were the favorite recreation of the women. Shinny and a game of ball not so very much unlike American baseball are also described. There were a number of arrow-shooting games, one game in which the the aim was to slide an arrow along the ground so that the feather would touch the feather of the opponent's arrow. 524 A very important game, and one which could be played only at night, involved the hiding of a bone in one of four half-